



South Carolina Department of Insurance

Capitol Center
1201 Main Street, Suite 1000
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

HENRY McMASTER
Governor

RAYMOND G. FARMER
Director

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 100105, Columbia, S.C. 29202-3105
Telephone: (803) 737-6160

Media Release

April 16, 2019
For Immediate Release

Contact: Katie Geer
Phone: 803-767-3331

The SCDOI Asks that You Put the Phone Down and Just Drive

Columbia, S.C. - April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and the South Carolina Department of Insurance (SCDOI) would like you to put the phone down this month and just drive.

"Every day at least nine people die and over one hundred people are injured from accidents resulting from distracted driving in the United States," said Ray Farmer, Director of the SCDOI. "That's nine deaths a day that could have been avoided if people simply would practice that when you are driving your hands go on the wheel and your eyes on the road."

Over the next few weeks, the SCDOI aims to educate consumers on the dangers of driving while distracted whether it is from impairment, texting or doing anything that takes their eyes off the road or hands off the wheel. Distracted driving is a serious public safety concern. Ten percent of fatal accidents in the United States involve at least one distracted driver, killing approximately 3,500 people each year.

Not only is distracted driving deadly, it is also costly. Before smartphones were released in 2007, the average annual expenses for auto insurance and motor vehicle accident fatalities were on the decline. Since then the numbers have risen steadily as more and more drivers participate in multitasking while behind the wheel. Researchers and state insurance regulators all point to distracted driving as a major cause of more frequent, costlier and too often deadly accidents. In addition, higher accident rates result in higher insurance premiums for many.

This month, and every month, drivers should take seriously the privilege of driving and consistently make choices that help protect their safety, and the safety of others.